Reservation for women in appointment and promotion

2969. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal for fifty per cent reservation for women in all appointments and promotions;

(b) the number of women in work force in Central sector, State sector, Organised sector and Unorganised sector;

(c) whether 6nancial dependency is the main cause of their misery; and

(d) if so, what are Government's plans to create more employment or self-employment opportunities for women?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL AND TRAINING AND DEPARTMENT OF PENSIONS AND PENSIONERS WELFARE OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) No Proposal for 50 per cent reservation for women in all appointments and promotion is under consideration of the Government.

(b) According to the information contained in the report of the Fifth Central Pay Commission, the number of women in Central Government employment was 2.83 lacs. As per information published in the Economic Survey 1999-2000, the number of women working in Organised Public and Private Sector as on 31.03.1998 was 47.7 lacs. The information regarding the number of women in workforce in the unorganised sector and in the State Sector is not centrally maintained.

(c) Generally, causes like financial dependence, lack of social security, lack of education, etc. have contributed against well being of women.

(d) The Government accords priority on the economic empowerment of women through a number of Schemes aimed at creating improved employment opportunities for women which

include asset endowment programmes, wage employment programmes and skill generation programmes.

Number of people below poverty line

† 2970. PROF. MM. AGARWAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of people living below poverty line in rural areas of the country is not declining even after fifty years of independence;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government have taken so far any policy decisions under the national agenda in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) The estimates of the incidence of rural poverty made by the Planning Commission from the large sample surveys on consumer expenditure conducted by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO). The percentage of people living below the poverty line in rural areas declined from 56.4% in 1973-74 to 37.3% in 1993-94 and the number of people below the poverty line in rural areas declined from 261.3 million to 244.0 million during the same period. On the basis of the 30-day recall tabulation in the Key Results of the 55th Round large sample survey of Household Consumer Expenditure in India carried out by the NSSO, 193.24 million of the rural population (27.09% of the total rural population) lived below the poverty line in 1999-2000.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) There is a three-pronged action to alleviate and reduce the poverty in the country. These are: (i) acceleration of economic growth, (ii) human, and social development through literacy,

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.